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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Georgia's At Risk Afterschool Meals Program is available**

*Afterschool programs, Child Care Centers and Head Start Programs offering afterschool programs are eligible to participate*

**Atlanta, Ga., (October 15, 2012)** -Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning announces the availability of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) At Risk Afterschool Meals Program at eligible afterschool programs throughout the state. Afterschool programs, Childcare centers and Head start programs that offer an afterschool component are eligible to participate. The At Risk Afterschool Meals Program is a part of and funded through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

"Providing nutritious meals to children in child care and afterschool programs is part of DECAL's commitment to nurturing Georgia's youngest learners, keeping them safe and healthy, and to enriching their lives," said Bobby Cagle, commissioner for Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. "We were very pleased to see the CACFP program expanded to include afterschool programs where many of our students are involved in educational and enrichment programs."

"Approved organizations receive cash reimbursement for up to one snack and one meal served to enrolled participants that are up to age 18, or whose 19th birthday occurs during the school year," explained Lou Brienza, DECAL Nutrition Services Director.

Programs eligible to participate in the At Risk Afterschool Meals Program include public or private non-profit organizations and eligible for-profit organizations located in an attendance area of a public school where at least 50 percent of the enrolled students are certified as eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Participating programs must provide educational or enrichment activities in an organized, structured, and supervised setting at the end of a school day, on weekends, or on holiday during the school day.

DECAL offers training and technical assistance to interested organizations. For more information on the available training dates and venues visit <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/Nutrition/CACFPTraining.aspx> or to register for the training, please contact the Nutrition Services Division at 404.657.1779.

To find an At Risk Afterschool Meal Programs, please visit the DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/Nutrition/Search.aspx>. Use the search function (zip code or county) to find a list of all local facilities, addresses, maps, contact names, and phone numbers.

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### **About Bright from the Start**

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov).